

Request for Information



City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED)

**Employment Service Providers for
H-1B/TechHire Partnership Grant**

January 15, 2016

Proposals Due by: 12:00 p.m., Friday, February 5, 2016

January 15, 2016

To whom it may concern:

The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is the lead applicant in a metropolitan-wide grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor's TechHire Partnership Grant opportunity (CFDA #17.268). The proposal will improve career pathways for youth and young adults between the ages of 17-29 in the high-growth Information Technology sector.

In advance of the March 11, 2016 application deadline, Minneapolis Employment and Training seeks to select partners to serve as Employment Service Providers, a Workforce Intermediary, and Training Partners. Eligibility requirements and guidelines for these three application opportunities can be found on the City of Minneapolis website: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/procurement/rfp>.

Attached is a Request for Information (RFI) for Employment Service Providers. The purpose of this RFI is to select organizations to perform employment services for eligible program participants throughout the seven-county metropolitan area. Organizations and entities responding to this solicitation must be eligible service providers, selected through the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Master Contractor RFP process, and included in the listing of eligible providers located at the following web page: http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/convert_253839.pdf

Please consider submitting a proposal for providing these services if your firm meets the qualifications and is available. Please review the RFI for details.

Proposals are due by 12:00 p.m. Friday, February 5, 2016

Sincerely,



D. Craig Taylor, Executive Director,
Community Planning and Economic Development



Deb Bahr-Helgen, Director,
Minneapolis Employment and Training

Table of Contents

RFI General Information	Page
I. Invitation	2
II. Pre-Proposal Conference.....	2
III. Proposal Due-Date and Location.....	2
IV. Proposal Content	3
V. Evaluation of Proposals – Contractor Selection	3
VI. Human Centered Design Meeting Attendance Required.....	4
VII. Schedule.....	4
VIII. Sub-Recipient Contracting.....	4
IX. Department Contact/Request for Clarification	4
X. Rejection of Proposals	4
XI. Addendum to the RFI.....	4
 Attachment A – Scope of Services	 5
 Attachment B – Responder Questions	 7
 Attachment C – Proposal Cover Sheet	 8

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR TechHire Employment Services

I. INVITATION: The City of Minneapolis (hereinafter referred to as the City), acting through its Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED), makes this Request for Information (hereinafter referred to as the RFI) in order to select a qualified agency (or agencies) (hereinafter referred to as the Employment Services Providers (ESP)). The Project is generally described in the “Scope of Services” (Attachment A), contained within this RFI, including descriptions of roles, responsibilities and relationship of the grant Sub-Recipient ESP, City, and other parties involved in the Project. All contracting under this solicitation is subject to City of Minneapolis Employment and Training receiving the federal award. The City reserves the right to negotiate all terms related to this solicitation. Any obligations of City of Minneapolis Employment and Training from the Federal government, upon receipt of funds, will be passed to the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training’s sub-recipients.

II. PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE: A pre-proposal conference will be held from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at City of Minneapolis Employment and Training, Suite 200, 105 Fifth Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401. Potential Employment Service Providers are encouraged to attend this conference. Applicants are welcome to submit questions, in writing, by e-mail to marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov, by January 21, 2016, at 4:30 p.m.

All questions received by this date/time will be addressed at the pre-proposal conference. Written responses to questions will be posted to the City of Minneapolis web page, at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/procurement/rfp> by 4:30 p.m. CST on January 28, 2016. No additional questions will be accepted following this deadline.

III. PROPOSAL DUE DATE and LOCATION: The prospective sub-recipient ESP (i.e. applicant) shall submit an original and eight (8) copies of their proposals to the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training:

City of Minneapolis Employment and Training
Request for Proposals for:
TechHire Partnership Grant – Sub-Recipient/Employment Service Provider
105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2593

Please label submissions, as follows:

City of Minneapolis Employment and Training
Request for Proposals for:
“TechHire Partnership Grant – Sub-Recipient/Employment Service Provider”

Respondents shall submit, along with paper copies of proposal, an electronic copy of the proposal via email to the following address: marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov. The email’s subject line should state: “TechHire Partnership Grant – Sub-Recipient/Employment Service Provider.”

The complete submittal shall be made at or before **12:00 P.M. February 5, 2016.**

NOTE: Late Proposals may not be accepted.

IV. PROPOSAL CONTENT: The Sub-recipient shall provide the appropriate information in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the evaluation criteria have been satisfied as specified in Section IV – “EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS”.

To allow for easier comparison of proposals during evaluation, proposals should contain the following sections and appendices and be arranged in consecutive order.

1. **Proposal Cover Sheet** (1 page) – See Attachment C.
2. **Executive Summary** (1 page) - This should include a short description of your agency’s history of moving individuals and families out of poverty and/or into meaningful employment in the technological economy.
3. **Experience and Capacity** (no more than 10, double-spaced pages) – See Attachment B: Describe agency background in providing employment services to youth and young adults, specifically between the ages of 17-29. How well does your work align with the mission of City of Minneapolis Employment and Training to grow a competitive workforce through programming aimed at helping youth learn academic, life and work skills, identify career paths, and achieve meaningful employment; and to increase access for young adults to resources that further career success, whether skills training to gain sustainable and stable employment or career counseling for rapid reentry to the workforce. Please include related and relevant programmatic outcomes within the past 3 years.
4. **References** - List references from workforce intermediary and/or related projects you currently operate or have operated in the past.
5. **Personnel Listing** - Show involved individuals with resumes and specific applicable experience who would work on this project.
6. **Company Financial Information** - Proof of financial responsibility, any bankruptcy filings by the Contractor, its principles and officers during the previous seven years.
7. **Grant-funded Services** - Include a copy of the most recent audit report and management letter.

V. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS – SELECTION OF SUB-RECIPIENT(S): Proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Panel made up of impartial readers. Evaluations will be based on the required criteria listed in Section III “PROPOSAL CONTENT”, and the following:

- A. Quality, thoroughness, and clarity of proposal.
- B. Qualifications and experience of staff (includes a review of references).
- C. How well the experience and capacity of agency meets department objectives.
- D. Financial responsibility and capacity of company including whether or not the company, any affiliates, subsidiaries, officers or directors have filed for federal bankruptcy protection within seven years of the date of this RFI.
- E. Organization and management approach and involvement for a successful delivery of program services and outcomes.

VI. HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN SESSION: Selected Employment Service Providers will be required to participate in a human centered design planning session for TechHire, scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at 105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55401. Failure to participate in this Project planning session will result in exclusion of the Employment Service Provider from partnering in the federal TechHire grant application.

VII. SCHEDULE: The following is a listing of key Proposal and Project milestones:

RFI Release	January 15, 2016
Written Questions on RFI Due by	January 21, 2016
Pre-Proposal Conference	January 26, 2016 (10:30am)
Responses to Questions posted by	January 28, 2016
Proposals due by	February 5, 2016 (12:00pm)
Estimated Sub-Recipient/ESP selection	February 11, 2016
Required Partner Meeting: Human Centered Design	February 16, 2016 (9am-12pm)
Estimated services start date (if grant is awarded)	July 1, 2016
Estimated services end date (if grant is awarded)	June 30, 2020

VIII. SUB-RECIPIENT CONTRACTING: If awarded the federal grant, the contracting parties will be the City of Minneapolis and the grant Sub-recipient(s) selected to provide the services as described herein.

IX. DEPARTMENT CONTACT/REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION: The applicants’ primary interface with the City will be with the Industry Relations Manager who will act as the City’s designated representative for this RFI. Prospective responders shall direct inquiries/questions ***in writing only*** to:

Marie Larson, CPED – Employment and Training
 105 5th Ave S, Suite 200
 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2593
 Email ID: marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov

The Industry Relations Manager is the only individual who can be contacted regarding this RFI before proposals are submitted. The Industry Relations Manager cannot vary the terms of the RFI.

All questions are due no later than **4:30 p.m., Thursday, January 21 2016**. Responses to the questions will be posted by **January 28, 2016** on City’s RFP website at: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/procurement/rfp>

X. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS: The City reserves the right to reject all proposals or any Sub-recipient ESP application on the basis of the proposal submitted.

XI. ADDENDUM TO THE RFI: If any addendum is issued for this RFI, it will be posted on the City of Minneapolis web site at: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/procurement/rfp>
 The City reserves the right to cancel or amend the RFI at any time.

ATTACHMENT A

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Minneapolis Employment and Training is a division of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development, a department of the City of Minneapolis. Minneapolis Employment and Training has been designated a Workforce Service Area under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, reaffirmed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and by the State of Minnesota. The Minneapolis Workforce Council, which is staffed by Minneapolis Employment & Training, provides strategic guidance for the broad partnerships that make up the local workforce development system – a “one-stop” service delivery system for area jobseekers and employers.

The collective goal is to build a workforce with the skills employers seek, in order to help strengthen and maintain the area’s economy. Employers benefit by hiring workers with the skills they need for business success; workers benefit by achieving and maintaining economic self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. A primary responsibility of the Minneapolis Workforce Council is guidance and oversight of employment and training programs administered by the City of Minneapolis.

The mission of City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is to grow a competitive workforce through programming aimed at helping youth learn academic, life and work skills, identify career paths, and achieve meaningful employment; and to increase access for adults to resources that further career success, whether skills training to gain sustainable and stable employment or career counseling for rapid reentry to the workforce.

To further these goals, City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is the lead applicant for a metropolitan regional H-1B TechHire Partnership Grant, recently released by the U.S. Department of Labor. The City of Minneapolis is applying for these funds in partnership with the Metro Workforce Investment Board, consisting of the following Workforce Service Areas: Minneapolis Employment and Training, Anoka County Job Training, Dakota-Scott County Workforce Services, Hennepin-Carver Workforce Council, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, and Washington County Workforce Center. If awarded, grant funds would provide employment counseling and IT training, leading to well-paying jobs in the IT industry, to residents of the seven-county metropolitan area serviced by these workforce service areas. The full grant announcement can be found at: <http://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?oppId=280094>. Information on the national TechHire initiative can be found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/technology/techhire>.

Response to this RFI DOES NOT GUARANTEE that your organization will be selected to provide employment services under this grant award. The selected applicant(s) will be notified, in writing, by the date indicated in this RFI. The City of Minneapolis’ provision of employment services is contingent upon receipt of the proposed federal award. This means that City of Minneapolis Employment and Training and partnering workforce service areas do not guarantee any funding level to responders of this RFI. The grant sub-recipients will work in collaboration with employers, the selected intermediary service provider, and the City to create new, or to enhance existing, pathways to employment and career advancement in the metropolitan region’s technology economy.

It is the intent of this document to outline the general services of employment service providers, but by no means is it conclusive or exhaustive. This RFI is asking applicants to explain how they propose to deliver employment services to facilitate training, apprenticeship, placement, and retention of youth and young adults (ages 17-29) in the technology economy throughout the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan region.

The scope of services of this RFI includes, but is not limited to, how a employment services would deliver: outreach and recruitment to youth and young adults with barriers to success; coordination with an intermediary service; unemployed and underemployed youth and young adults (ages 17-29) with barriers to employment; assessment of eligibility of potential participants; assessment of competencies or credentials to demonstrate to employers an individual's labor market value; business/employer outreach; provision of Registered Apprenticeships; job placement, and employment retention services to youth and young adults.

Organizations functioning as employment service providers for the express purpose of serving the needs of jobseekers will lend their expertise by: 1) having credibility with employers and training organizations; 2) present a proven track record in developing age-appropriate services for individuals under the age of 30 but over age 17; 3) possess the capability to perform employment services throughout the seven-county metro area; 4) actively participate in human centered design pre-award, in partnership with the City and other selected partners; 5) anticipate that all results will be made public throughout the grant period; 6) possess high-level capabilities in the areas of case management and data reporting.

ATTACHMENT B

The Applicant to this RFI will include responses to the following issues and questions in a narrative format, describing their Experience and Capacity. The narrative should no more than 10 double-spaced pages, using 12 point font and allowing 1” right/left margins.

Section 1 (no points)

Geographic Coverage

Please list all metropolitan area counties in which you plan to provide employment services. If your organization does not currently service the geography you intend to cover, provide your plan for expanding service capacity. Counties included in the Minneapolis TechHire grant service area include: Ramsey, Washington, Hennepin, Dakota, Scott, Anoka, and Carver counties.

Section 2: Total possible points: 100

1. **(15 points) Organizational History and Capacity**—Provide a description of your organization, including its mission, history, and capacity to provide the services contained in this RFI. If applicable, describe your organization’s experience with federal grant programs and your organization’s internal controls to comply with federal grant requirements.
2. **(5 points) Data Collection, Management and Reporting**—Describe your organization’s capabilities and strategies to collect and streamline participant-level and program-level data, across the seven-county metropolitan area, including information on education and training, assessment, job matching, job placement, reported wages, support services, and retention. Also, describe your invoicing process, as related to these indicators.
3. **(15 points) Outreach and Recruitment**—Describe your experience and success with providing outreach and recruitment to the proposed, diverse, nontraditional target population (ages 17-29) with barriers to employment opportunities, as well as your experience in recruiting for high-growth IT careers.
4. **(5 points) Eligibility Determination** – Please provide information on the processes and techniques you employ to document participant-level program eligibility. Incorporate specific examples as related to government-funded programming.
5. **(15 points) Assessment**—Provide a detailed description of how your organization proposes to assess the competencies or credentials of program participants in order to refer jobseekers to appropriate trainings, and to demonstrate to employers an individual’s labor market value.
6. **(20 points) Job Placement Strategies**—Provide a detailed explanation of your organization’s proposed strategy to place the program participants from the target population in middle- to high-skilled IT occupations. If applicable, include a clear description of specific education and training activities (such as OJT, paid work experience, paid internship, or Registered Apprenticeship) that your organization proposes to facilitate in order to place individuals with barriers to accessing training and employment.
7. **(15 points) Outcomes** – Please provide information on your organization’s performance over the past three years, indicating outcomes for services you have provided to similar populations, through similar programs. Also, detail your outcomes in the Twin Cities IT sectors, including business partners you engage with in our region.
8. **(10 points) Leverage** – Describe, in detail, all leveraged grants, programs, and resources your organization would leverage for this Project. Please include the estimated value for all, projecting of the prospective Project (i.e., from 7/1/2016 through 6/30/2020).

ATTACHMENT C

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

<i>Please complete this cover page and attach it to your proposal.</i>	
Agency Name: Director Name: Telephone: Fax: Email:	Contact Name: Title: Telephone: Fax: Email:
Address:	Address:
Federal Tax ID: (required)	Minnesota Tax ID: (required)
DUNS Number: (required)	

Applicants must submit an original and eight (8) copies of this completed cover page and proposal by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, February 5, 2016. Late or incomplete proposals may not be considered.

Proposal Format and Submission Guidance:

- Late or incomplete proposals may not be accepted
- The cover page, original proposal, and **eight** copies of each should be submitted in one envelope labeled: **Request for Proposal: TechHire Partnership Grant – Sub-Recipient/Employment Service Provider**
- Proposals should be double spaced
- Font size should not be less than twelve **(12)** point
- A preproposal applicant conference will be held on January 26, 2016 – see RFP for details.

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant.

Authorized Signature	Title	Date

City of Minneapolis Employment and Training use only

Date Received		Time Received		Staff Initials Received	
---------------	--	---------------	--	-------------------------	--